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ABSTRACT

Part I gives a detailed description of the services provided by the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress. The division serves the reading needs of these people by reproducing books on microgroove disc, magnetic tape, tape cassette, and in various forms of braille. The author estimates that there are at least 2,000,000 U.S. citizens eligible for the Library's free services but that about 10 percent are aware of their eligibility and take advantage of the program. This part concludes with a list of the regional libraries that serve the handicapped. Part II is basically an appeal to those concerned with communications to assist in publicizing the Library's program and informing those eligible for the special assistance of their "right to read." (RN)

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COMMUNICATION FOR THE BLIND:

Part I: RIGHT TO READ FOR BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

and

Part II: NEW THINK: COMMUNICATION IS FOR EVERYONE

by

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PART I

RIGHT TO READ FOR BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

At least two million residents of the United States have every "right to read" books on every subject, which are tailored to their special needs and produced free of any charge for them by the Library of Congress. About 10 percent of those eligible are currently taking advantage of this right.

These are the visually and/or physically handicapped of the nation whose reading needs are served by books reproduced on microgroove disc, magnetic tape or tape cassette and in various forms of braille by the Library's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Many eligible readers are not taking advantage of this unusual library service because they are not aware it exists. Eligible, but perhaps not knowing it, residents of nursing homes, hospital patients, individuals with nerve or muscular damage resulting from multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, paralysis, arthritis, and others, may remain isolated from society, missing the many benefits of reading. They have the right to read... Congress has seen to it that the resources are there. Perhaps more important to the visually and physically handicapped of the nation, is the "right to know" these materials exist.

The national program, administered in cooperation with 48 regional libraries and special representatives in several states is almost as varied as the potential needs of its users. That it already exists is evidence of the right to read as exhibited in this country. Responsibility for letting the nearly two million potential users know of the service rests not only upon the Library of Congress and the regional libraries in the program, but upon every public library, every state or local service for the handicapped, relatives of potential users and upon every enlightened citizen.

The goal of the Library of Cor reading program is to bring to those eligible the same kind and quality of service ble in public libraries throughout the country and with comparable ease and acces lity. In order to do this, two kinds of "right to read" problems involving the handicapped require continual reevaluation and research: 1) that of bringing to this segment of the population the kinds of reading materials most needed by them, and 2) to furnish them with the types of equipment most helpful in utilizing available books and materials. These areas are particularly important in service to the handicapped, since they cannot ordinarily browse around libraries, choosing materials for themselves.

The handicapped reader receives assistance in book selection through the mail, just as he receives his books and machines on which to play them. Although most readers never meet their regional librarians, a strong tie emerges as a result of the care librarians take in satisfying reading tastes through personal guidance.

Both books and equipment go free through the mail; Congress authorized free mailing service for the blind in 1904 and extended it to the physically handicapped when they became eligible for the service.

To assist in service to readers, Division librarians make use of reader surveys and polls to keep abreast of changes in the overall makeup of the public served. Two very large segments of that public, as recognized today, are those in the professions, including a highly mobile group of visually handicapped readers and the increasing number of either blind or physically handicapped older readers.

Substantial progress has been made in attaining new levels of reader satisfaction in both areas. For the braille-oriented blind person, for whom Congress originally established the centralized free library service in 1931, many new braille formats have appeared, including the introduction of brailled musical scores in 1962. Perhaps one of the most innovative, however, was the introduction of the cassette player and tapes in 1968, especially to make reading easier for students and highly mobile users, requiring the flexibility of the cassette.

At the present time, popular and instructional titles in press braille in the national program number over four thousand with 282 titles being added each fiscal year. Subjects range from light recreational reading to literate and esoteric material, and are announced in a bimonthly magazine going to all readers entitled Braille Book Review.

But a blind, physically handicapped, or partially sighted reader would still lack access to materials of limited interest were it not for voluntary transcribers. Books produced by volunteers in hand-copied braille on a braille writer or slate, in large type from a typewriter with extra-large characters, or on magnetic tape answer the particular requests of readers and supplement the Library of Congress collection of press braille and talking books.

The Division compiles instruction manuals for braille transcribing and guidelines for tape recording, publishes a quarterly newsletter, VOLUNTEER NEWS, and a directory, VOLUNTEERS WHO PRODUCE BOOKS. A primary part of the Division's responsibility is in training and certifying braille transcribers and in auditing tapes for its collection.

Through the Division's Music Services Unit, approximately twenty-one thousand titles in press braille and hand-copied musical scores have been brought into the national program and prepared for circulation to blind musicians.

The Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has developed a comprehensive program for training volunteer transcribers in the intricacies of braille music

notation in order to fill gaps in the braille collection and to provide for special needs of users. Instructional recordings on tape and disc are available in addition to titles in large type. A bimonthly magazine for readers in this specialty is entitled The New Braille Musician, which includes "Braille Music Review", a list of latest acquisitions.

Many visually handicapped and almost all physically handicapped readers do not possess the skill of reading braille, therefore the most essential addition to the overall program since its beginning has been the introduction of the microgroove record. Many technical improvements have been made in talking books since 1934, making them far more compact and lighter in weight enabling the Library to maintain steady service in the face of increasing numbers of older readers as well as the large addition of physically handicapped persons in 1966.

Through a selection process which subscribes to the standards laid down by the American Library Association, the Library chooses 700 book titles a year to be recorded on 16 2/3 rpm microgroove discs by professional narrators. There are currently over 3500 titles in the national talking book program, ranging from E. B. White's Charlotte's Web to War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy.

Periodicals include national magazines such as AMERICAN HERITAGE, ATLAS, CONSUMER REPORT, TRUE, NEWSWEEK, READER'S DIGEST, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, and many others. These are sent through the mail free, along with talking book phonographs on which to play books or periodicals.

Magnetic tape was introduced into the national program in 1958-59 to aid students, and gradually evolved into the more versatile tape cassette program. Master tapes are kept on file and more than 1,500 books on tape are available on free loan from the Division. Although cassettes have taken over the lead in duplication of materials for professionals and remain oriented in that direction at the present, the special needs of the physically handicapped are being studied in relation to the highly versatile cassette machine. Division planners hope to introduce this reading aid to many segments of the handicapped population.

At the present time, special devices which allow the partially paralyzed or immobile patient to make use of phonographs and records are available. Similar adaptations are being produced for the cassette machine. Some aids already being distributed to readers for use with talking book machines include earphones, pillowphones, and remote control and variable speed units.

Some of the special materials introduced within the last several years, combine two or more reproduction methods into one presentation. These include the print book

and record sets, the print book and cassette sets, and series of book and record sets recorded at a slower speed of reading for handicapped children who have particular reading difficulties. Twin-vision braille books which are braille books inter-paged with print copy, are available also for kindergarten through third grade.

The three major educational programs benefiting from this new material are 1) preparing multiple-handicapped, pre-school children aged three to five, to take their places in school; 2) assisting handicapped and severely retarded children from selected groups to achieve personal goals such as clothing and feeding themselves, and 3) teaching retarded students who have difficulty with standard print, enabling them to use library sources in combination with regular educational materials.

Future plans for reading innovations include the development of projected books for the sighted though physically handicapped reader.

In addition to the books and materials furnished by the Library of Congress on a national basis, a system of volunteers transcribe books into braille and on tape for a program of one-to-one service especially for students or professional people who require only one copy of a manuscript or text.

Since 1966, the total program has been available by law to all persons who are unable to read conventional printed materials because of physical limitations. Examples of such limitations are impaired eyesight or other malfunction of the eyes, inability to hold a book or to turn pages, and the inability to hold printed material steadily enough to read it.

Eligibility must be certified by competent authority such as ophthalmologists, optometrists or doctors of medicine, able to certify visual or physical disability. Other acceptable certifying authorities are heads of agencies or state chapters of agencies, registered nurses, professional staff of hospitals, rehabilitation centers, institutions and homes, the professional staff of health and welfare agencies and similar persons associated with reputable private agencies, professional librarians knowledgeable of a community or of residents remote from other facilities, and educators. The Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is responsible for resolving problems concerning eligibility.

Reading reduces handicaps... and fulfills the basic right of every citizen as set forth in this book on resources. The blind and physically handicapped are assured their rights to read by appropriation from Congress: they also have the right to know and use that privilege to the fullest extent.

REGIONAL LIBRARIES SERVING THE HANDICAPPED ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
525 North Court Street
Talladega, Alabama 35160

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
1016 North 32nd Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85008

Library for the Blind and Handicapped
311 West Capitol Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Books for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
9th Street and Capitol Mall
Sacramento, California 95809

Braille Institute Library
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90029

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
1332 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
90 Washington Street
Hartford, Connecticutt 06106

National Collections for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542

Talking Book Library
420 Platt Street
Daytona Beach, Florida 32014

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
1050 Murphy Avenue, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30310

State Library for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
402 Dapahulu Avenue
Honolulu, HAWAII 96815

Department for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
4544 Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
140 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Iowa Commission for the Blind
Fourth and Keosauqua Streets
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
801 Harrison Street, Room 5
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Post Office Box 818
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Department for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Box 131
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

State Library for the
Physically Handicapped
1715 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Perkins School for the Blind
175 North Beacon Street
Watertown, Massachusetts 02172

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
735 East Michigan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Department for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
33030 Van Born Road
Wayne, Michigan 48184

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Braille and Sight Saving School
Faribault, Minnesota 55021

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Mart 51, Terry Road
Jackson, Mississippi 39204

Wolfner Memorial Library for
the Blind and Physically Handicapped
1808 Washington Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
930 East Lyndale Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
State Capitol
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

Library for the Physically
Handicapped
2351 Arrowhead Drive
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Library Services to the
Handicapped Division
12 Hills Avenue
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Library for the Blind and
Handicapped
1700 Calhoun Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08638

Books for the Blind and Physically
Handicapped Division
Box 1629
Sante Fe, New Mexico 87501

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
166 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10013

Library for the Blind
226 Elm Street
Albany, New York 12202

North Carolina - South Carolina
Regional Library for the Blind
1314 Dale Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27605

Braille and Talking Book Service
325 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

Library for the Blind
444 West Third Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
1108 N.E. 36th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73111

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
432 Church Street, S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
1700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19130

Regional Library for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
4724 Baum Boulevard
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

Regional Library for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
95 Davis Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
701 East Sioux Avenue
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
5200 Centennial Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37209

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Post Office Box 12927
Austin, Texas 78711

Division for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
2150 South 2nd West, Suite 16
Salt Lake City, Utah 84115

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Post Office Box 390
St. Thomas, VIRGIN ISLANDS 00801

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
3003 Parkwood Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
425 Harvard Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98102

Library for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
814 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Questions on the program may be directed to the Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 1291 Taylor Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20542.

PART II

NEW THINK: COMMUNICATION IS FOR EVERYONE

by

Shirley Al-Doory

Library of Congress

Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Washington, D. C. 20542

International Communication Association
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NEW THINK: COMMUNICATION IS FOR EVERYONE

Papers presented during this meeting will probably be printed and made available to interested readers. Thus new thinking on communications and learning would be made available to many others through the medium of the printed word.

Since we still depend so much upon books and other printed materials for information about our world, whether for instruction or for pleasure, one of the things we strive NOT to think about, is blindness, or any other handicap which would prevent someone from holding or reading a book.

Yet one in 20 Americans may be facing this problem at this very moment.

The theme of this conference is new thinking in communications and learning within physical limitations. It seems natural, therefore, to extend our thinking to the communications needs of the physically handicapped segment of the American population.

Close to ten million residents of the United States are disabled in some way. Many of them cannot utilize conventional print. Yet they have every right to read books on every subject, just as you and I do. How is this right fulfilled? The Library of Congress, through Congressional authorization, produces books on microgroove record, cassette tape and in braille for the blind and physically handicapped. These special formats are tailored to the reading needs of the handicapped, which are as varied as yours and mine, and they are provided free of any charge for eligible readers. Machines on which to play the books are provided free, and postage to and from cooperating libraries for both books and machines is free.

Thus the "right to read" and communicate is fulfilled for the nation's handicapped--as long as they know about, and make use of, this service. Since only 10 percent of the total handicapped population is known to take advantage of this "right", the only assumption one can make is that potential users are not aware of the existence of the service, or of their own eligibility. We know for a fact that many residents of nursing homes, patients in hospitals, and many other individuals with visual or physical disabilities which prevent the reading of print, are remaining isolated from society, missing the benefits of reading, because they do not know about the world of recorded books.

They may be eligible because of age which has brought on visual loss, or because of advanced diabetes, or they may be unable to hold a regular book for an extended period of time, because of arthritis or stroke; they may be eligible because of nerve or muscular damage resulting from multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy or other crippling diseases. Whatever the reason, whether the disability is temporary or permanent--the individual who cannot use conventional print may be eligible for the reading program furnished by the Library of Congress.

It is not always easy to publicize a free public service.

Restrictions range from regulatory to budgetary, as you all know. The Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which administers this program, has had very good success in working with some of the nonprofit organizations related to the handicapped, in publicizing the program.

This year, however, the Division is making a concentrated effort to reach out to those who can reach many, many more through newsletters, institutional literature or other publications.

You, as communicator, can help. And we sincerely expect you to do so.

The feedback could be substantial. Students, employees, family members, friends ... at some time any or all of these may need the reading service provided by the Library of Congress.

Services range from books in braille, many in new formats, to talking books, which come in records and cassettes.

One of the newer formats in braille is the twin-vision book, where print and illustrations interpaged with braille, enable a blind parent to read more successfully to a sighted child. A variation of this format is the "sniff 'n smell" book, where scents of roses, strawberries or maybe mint may actually be emitted by scratching the appropriate area on the paper's surface.

Musical scores in braille are available as well as sets of braille musical transcriptions with recorded accompaniment.

Of the braille magazines available to readers by direct mail, none is more popular than Playboy.

In the recorded media, print book and record combinations, some recorded at a slow reading rate, have been found useful in teaching children with reading disabilities. The compressed speech recording satisfies the student's requirement for more

material in less listening time. And cassette tape and playback machines have been added to the program to supplement records and phonographs. Cassettes are particularly useful for highly mobile individuals, such as those in the professions.

Titles in the program range from Shakespeare's Hamlet to How to Form Your Own Rock Group. Some of the more popular national magazines on record are Consumer Reports, Newsweek and Reader's Digest, recorded both in English and in Spanish.

These materials are available now, to every twentieth American who may need them. The Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped exists to help meet the reading needs of the handicapped. Furthermore, the service is completely free.

Take a moment to think of those who still live in a darkened world, made less bright by the absence of books. Make it a point to inform your audiences--whoever they may be--on the availability of this program. One never knows who may need it: a brother, sister, friend, or neighbor. Our responsibility is to let you know. Your responsibility as communicators is to help spread the word. It is, if nothing else, the duty of every American ... to help countrymen live richer, more rewarding lives through reading, wherever he can.

In America, reading and other forms of communication truly must be--for everyone.